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Setbacks Dealt Latin Reds Noted

Associated Press

Gen. Andrew P. O'Meara, chief of the U.S. Southern Command, said yesterday that Latin American military forces "are having some notable sucesses in their efforts against Communist and other guerrilla groups."

O'Meara gave his views in a statement prepared for a closed session of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He cited these "notable successes":

"In Colombia, the effective campaign waged by the military decreased substantially the number of violent deaths attributable to bandit operations.

"In Bolivia, the (Victor) Paz (Estenssoro) Government was successful in its confrontations with the Communist-led miners.

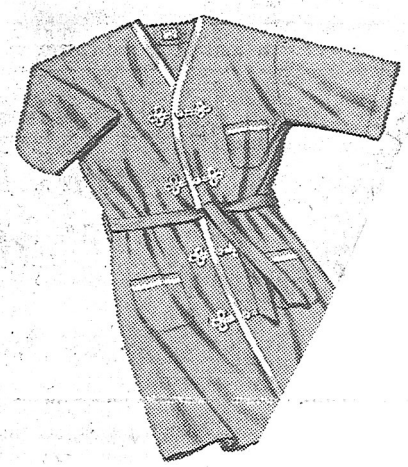
"In Venezuela, firm military backing of the constitutional process enabled President Romulo Betancourt to turn over the government on 11 March 1964 to his constitutionally elected successor, marking the first time in Venezuelan history that a legally elected President completed his full term of office.

"Most recently, in Brazil the establishment of an authoritarian regime was averted by the combined action of state governors and the armed forces."

O'Meara said the large river systems of some Latin American countries "are becoming channels of Communist penetration" and their navies need to be developed for patrolling the streams.

He said much of the success against guerrillas last year must be attributed to civic action—local improvement projects conducted by the armed forces.

In Bolivia, O'Meara said, "the school building, road building and medical program of the armed forces convinced large groups of the Indian population that these armed forces which they had historically considered as their enemies were in fact their friends."



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